(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI E. AHAMMED): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) They are still in Pakistani jail.

(c) Yes, Sir.

(d) The officials of the High Commission of India, Islamabad have met these fourteen Indians during the consular access on July 16-18, 2005 along with other Indian fishermen and have confirmed their nationality to the Government of Pakistan. The High Commission is consistently taking up the matter of release of all the Indian fishermen with the Government of Pakistan through diplomatic channels.

Forged passports and visas

1935. SHRI E.M. SUDARSANA NATCHIAPPAN: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is also a fact that a number of cases of forged passports and visa have come to light;

(b) if so, the steps being taken by Government to check this trend; and

(c) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI E. AHAMMED): (a) Forgeries in passports and visas do come to the notice of the authorities from time to time.

(b) The Government has taken several steps to check the menace of forged travel documents. These include introduction of Machine Readable Passports (MRP), computerization of databases, installation of intelligent computer terminals at international airports, pre-induction and re-orientation training of immigration officials to detect forged travel documents.

Whenever instances of forged travel documents come to light, the Government, in consultation with Security Agencies, revokes such passports, and holders of such passports are placed in Prior Approval Category (PAC).

(c) Not applicable.